



**Abner Bayangan (K-L YES)
Shelf for Hope Project**

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USALUMNEWS

September 2013

Two Filipino Alumni Projects Win 2013 Alumni Engagement Innovation Fund (AEIF)!

Out of 681 proposals from 119 countries, two proposals from the Philippines were chosen as winners of the 2013 Alumni Engagement Innovation Fund (AEIF) Competition. International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP) Alumnus Rex Bernardo will receive \$18,477 for the "Project W.I.R.E.D for PWD Sector." Project W.I.R.E.D, which means Work Innovation through Resource Enabled Development, utilizes a strategy for training people with disabilities (PWD) in a work-from-home model. Through e-learning, PWDs will be trained to become skilled virtual assistants and online freelancers. Bernardo will work with a team of Filipino alumni from different International Exchange programs such as the Hubert Humphrey Fellowship Program and Global Undergraduate Exchange Program.

Study of the U.S. Institutes Program Alumnus William Robert Yasi is the second winner from the Philippines. He will receive \$24,999 for his proposed "The Great ASEAN Eco- Debates." At least 10 schools from the ASEAN countries are set to be part of this project to hold an inter-ASEAN collegiate Asian Parliamentary debate competition focusing on existing environmental issues and solutions. Yasis' team is made up of alumni from different programs and different countries such as Pakistan, Vietnam, Indonesia, Thailand, and the United States. At the end of the program, views presented during the debate will be collated and published on the event website.

Congratulations to both of the winners!

The AEIF is the only grant competition run by the U.S. State Department that is exclusively open to alumni of U.S. government programs.

**ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT
INNOVATION FUND**

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
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Letter from the Editor

Welcome to the second edition of USAalumnews! We have lots of great information to share this quarter. Alumni have been very active, from visiting teenage prisoners to receiving the 2013 Metrobank Foundation Outstanding Teacher award to winning Alumni Engagement Innovation Fund grants from the U.S. Department of State.

The U.S. Embassy also has exciting information to share. We will hold an ASEAN Youth Summit in Manila this December and applications are open to all alumni of U.S. Government exchange programs aged 18-25.

We are impressed with the great achievements of our alumni, so please keep sending us your stories. This is a great opportunity to highlight your successes and for other alumni to get ideas, find partners, and network.

I am looking forward to meeting many of you as we travel throughout the country!



Jennifer Foltz
Assistant Cultural
Affairs Officer

State Alumni Community - Philippines Facebook page

Philippine International Exchange Alumni have their own Facebook page: State Alumni Community-Philippines! This page and alumni.state.gov serve as social media platforms for alumni to share news, updates, insights, and opportunities with the Philippine alumni community. If you haven't yet "liked" our page; please do so and connect, inspire, and empower!



facebook.com/StateAlumniPhilippines

A Shelf of Hope for Every Child By: Abner Bayangan



On July 13, 2013 I travelled from Manila to Nueva Vizcaya, my home province. I visited the mountain communities where many years ago American missionaries started Christian ministries to cater to the spiritual and educational needs of the ethnic minority groups in the province. My mission was to put up a shelf of books in Abatan Elementary School, one of the public elementary schools within the community. I also gave a short inspirational talk which I entitled, "Read and Communicate Effectively!" We named this project the "Shelf of Hope." The idea is that by strategically locating a shelf of books in this school, pupils can have easy access to periodicals, books and publications that will broaden their perspectives and create a love for learning.

After I turned over the books, some of the teachers thanked me. I also listened to their selfless dreams. The teachers model respect and passion for learning in their everyday interaction with their students. But despite their efforts to shape their pupils into competent individuals with excellent character, there is still a gap between what should happen to what in reality happens to their pupils after they graduate from the institution. Most of their pupils don't proceed to high school because they have to help in their parents' farms. Few of those who finish high school enter college because either they lack financial support or they simply have to start working to support their families. Only a slim percentage of their graduates finish college to pursue professional careers.

After giving a half-hour lecture on the topic of reading and communicating effectively, I asked one of the 60 pupils what they want to become someday. Lea, a 13 year old in grade 6, said "I want to be a teacher." I prompted why. "I want to teach others so that they can have a better life," she replied with passion and confidence. I became numb and speechless. I just didn't expect that response. How can someone young and in need have that kind aspiration in her heart? Education is a gift that keeps on giving. One of the most effective ways to combat illiteracy among the population is to empower the public schools in the Philippines. Illiteracy breeds ignorance which in turn begets poverty.

The point is that the Shelf of Hope project is an avenue for elementary pupils to think beyond and above their present circumstances. They can start achieving their dreams now by reading and communicating effectively, with the help from their teachers and the books at their Shelf of Hope. The Shelf of Hope project is made possible through the U.S. Embassy in Manila's Speakers program and the books were donated by the Regional English Language Officer and International Information Programs (IIP). The writer is also a K-L YES programs alumnus, a one-year exchange program to study in the United States funded by the U.S. Department of State.

The Shelf of Hope is an ongoing project that is open to sponsors and individuals who may want to be a part of this project. It's simple. The current needs of the projects are books, instructional materials for teachers and multi-media resources.

Celebrating Global Youth Service Day

by Alrajhi R. Sappari (YES '11)
& Firash Zhed S. Ututalum (YES '13)



In celebration of the Global Youth Service Day 2013, Youth Exchange and Study Program (YES) alumni organized two outreach programs, "Hope Behind Bars" and "Big Bang for Liang," in Zamboanga.

"Hope Behind Bars" was conceived to bring joy to teenage prisoners incarcerated at the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP). Recognizing their role in the society as well as their struggle behind bars, YES alumni from Zamboanga City felt there was something they could do to put smiles on these teenagers' faces. On April 28, the alumni prepared games, snacks, and lunch for the teenage participants. In the afternoon, the alumni shared their U.S. exchange experiences, while the prisoners also shared the stories of their lives. The activity ended with the Yarn Game, leaving all the alumni and prisoners connected by the yarn - symbolizing the beginning of their friendships.

"Bing Bang for Liang" was initiated by YES alumni from Jolo, Sulu to increase the community service involvement of young alumni and to improve the welfare of the community through an information campaign on nutrition and health. The feeding program and health education was lead by volunteers from the SSC School of Nursing. The health center is far away from many community members' homes, making knowledge about communicable diseases like dengue, malaria, tuberculosis, typhoid fever, and filariasis low. The program aims to increase awareness among parents to help them in prevention. The children and their parents were informed of their rights as citizens of the community as they face different social problems and discrimination. The police also got involved. A session on Juvenile Justice Welfare was led by Senior Police Officer 2 Meriam Salim, Acting Chief of Western Command Police District, while the story telling focused on children's rights was led by Police Officer 1 Alfrazkhan Abdurajak.

Manila to Host ASEAN Youth Alumni Summit in December

The U.S. Embassy in Manila, in partnership with Ayala Foundation Incorporated, will host a gathering of youth alumni aged 18-25 of U.S. Government Exchange Programs from all 10 ASEAN countries December 2013. The event will bring together 150 youth leaders to discuss issues pertinent to ASEAN countries, learn about initiatives in the Philippines through exposure trips, create and strengthen an ASEAN youth network, and promote a stronger ASEAN identity.

Through the program, participants will have the opportunity to forge a regional community of youth committed to carrying out activities to improve their communities. The delegates will also be able to practice and enhance their leadership skills through a series of discussions on innovative ways to raise awareness and propose solutions to key issues confronting the region.

Check U.S. Embassy Manila's website and Facebook page for more information coming soon!

IVLP Alumni Joins Eco-Tourism Forum in Southern Palawan



Three International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP) Alumni participated as speakers at the Environment and Eco-Tourism Forum in Brooke's Point, Palawan August 22-23. The workshop was hosted by U.S. Embassy Manila in partnership with Mindanao Youth Corps Volunteer Inc. and the Department of Education. The program reached 40 students from 11 high schools in Southern Palawan in an effort to encourage youth to get involved in the province's eco-tourism industry, as well as raise awareness of the importance of protecting the environment.

Alumni Glenn Forbes gave an orientation to the students on the importance of protecting the environment and the role of the younger generation. The discussion was followed by a module on maximizing indigenous wealth through entrepreneurship by alumni and owner of Binuatan Creations, Eva Valledor. The last alumna, blogger/journalist Maria Irene Aserios, spoke on using social media in marketing. At the conclusion of the workshop, three proposals received a mini-grant to implement community outreach projects.



“PENCIL FOR PEACE” PROJECT

Accomplished by: Abdul Rahman Alongan (YES '08)

With Inputs from: Al-Bari Macalawan (YES '06)

& Mahid Macadato (YES '04)



On June 16, 2013, the Pencil for Peace Project, with the tagline “How Far Can Your 200 Pesos Go? Bring the Gift of Education to Maguindanao” was successfully conducted at Pened Primary School in Kabuntalan, Maguindanao by Youth Exchange and Study Program (YES) alumni and American Field Service (AFS) volunteers from metro Manila and Cotabato City, Philippines. Alumni organized this fundraising initiative to help the students of the school by giving them education supplies that they can use for the current school year.

The YES alumni and AFS volunteers strategically chose Pened Primary School as it is located in one of the conflict areas in Mindanao. The community has suffered greatly from recurrent conflicts between military and rebel forces in the previous years. Pened, and Maguindanao province in general have remained so impoverished that even education materials are rare. For example, an adult literacy program conducted by an internationally funded agency took place in area, and one adult recipient of school materials gave them to his kids who did not have paper and pencil for school. Such stories are common to the people of Pened.

This project is a result of a 2-month long fundraising activity by a core group of YES alumni. Despite the heat, long land and boat rides, everything was all worth it after seeing those lovely smiles from the students and parents.

The happiness continued on as we started distributing the school supplies, which composed of a pencil, five notebooks, a pad of paper, five bond papers, paste, scissors, sharpener, and crayons. A total of 100 school kits were given to the Grade 1 and Grade 2 pupils.

According to Samraida Ebrahim, mother of one of the students of Pened Primary School, “I buy my child’s notebooks but they are not enough for the school year. Because of this project, my son will no longer have any reason not to study hard.”



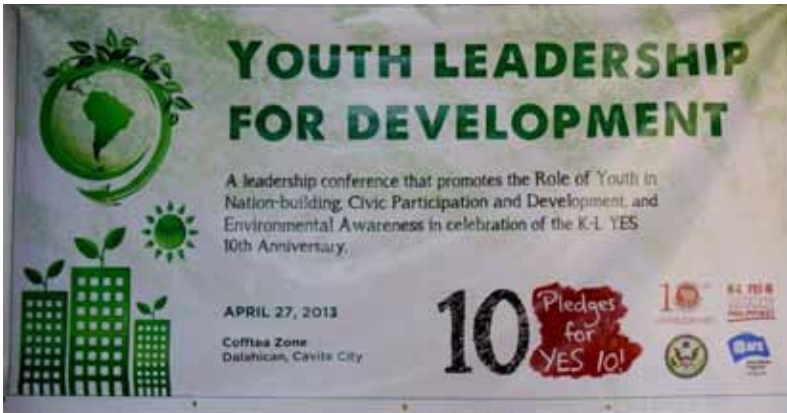
Personally, it was an overwhelming experience as alumni because I, together with other YES alumni, was able to help students and a community in my own little way. I know that the help we provided is not enough, but I strongly believe that great things come in small packages. I do not look at the number of supplies we were able to give, what matters most for me is that we were able to show them that some people care, that a group of young people like us still believes in them. Many of us also came from a very humble beginning, but because we never stopped striving to learn and discover, we now enjoy helping and inspiring other people. There are things in the world we take for granted, but if we look beyond our boundaries we find so many realities of the world. And I hope to be part of the generation that will change those.



The YES alumni directly involved in the project are: Al-Bari Macalawan, Aludia Grace Nolan (YES '09), Abdul Rahman Alongan, Solayman Maso and Nor-ain Kumayog (YES '08), Jeahan Haron and Abdalcader Alsoufi (YES '09), Benjamin Abubakar, Cairoden Bongcarawan, and Haidar Midtimbang (YES '10), Bai Jemimah K. Sinarimbo and Jowahdi M. Salik (YES '11). This project will not be as successful without the help of our sponsors, special thanks to Mrs. Rahiema “Bonnie” Guerra (AFS Philippines and AAI President) and Commissioner Earl Saavedra (National Youth Commission).

YES ALUMNI ORGANIZE LEADERSHIP TRAINING:

YOUTH LEADERSHIP FOR DEVELOPMENT By Al-Bari B. Macalawan (YES '06)



April 27 – Kennedy Lugar Youth Exchange and Study (K-L YES) Program alumni from metro Manila in partnership with the Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) Youth Council of Cavite conducted a leadership training in Cavite City with the theme “Youth Leadership For Development.”

The conference aimed to equip the SK youth leaders of Cavite City with skills and knowledge on the areas of civic education, environment and action planning. Jemima Landong, K-L YES alumna batch 2005-2006 hosted in South Colombia, Pennsylvania, opened the workshop with a discussion of leadership qualities and the contribution of youth in social change and nation-building. Mr. Paul Caampued III from the REID Foundation delivered a lecture on the role of youth initiating change in their own communities. He highlighted the importance of good leadership and excellence exemplified by the work of Dr. Jose P. Rizal, the Philippine national hero.

From Tanggol Kalisakan, a non-governmental organization which advocates for environmental conservation, Mr. Glenn Forbes discussed environmental efforts to save the Manila Bay and identified areas where SK youth leaders can contribute. During the action planning workshop, the SK youth leaders came up with projects targeting the environment through cleaning programs, mangrove planting and waste segregation management. A group led by Ms. Justine Ponsones, SK Federation Chair of Cavite City, presented projects for the SK officials, in the areas of financial management, computer literacy training and livelihood training for out-of-school youth. The conference ended with closing remarks from Mr. Richmond Jimenez, Alumni Coordinator from the US Embassy Manila, who attended the one day event.

The leadership training is the second entry for the “10 pledges for KL-YES 10”, a one year community project initiated in celebration of the K-L YES 10th anniversary by the K-L YES alumni community from the Philippines.

A day after the project in Cavite City, K-L YES alumni and volunteers from the AFS IPP Metro Manila Chapter visited the Home of Joy Orphanage in Dasmariñas, Cavite. The volunteers arranged storytelling sessions and games with fifteen children from the orphanage. Ms. Maria Carina Dungao from the Regional English Language Office of the U.S. Embassy Manila read a story about the environment along with Ms. Clarice Fajardo, K-L YES alumna and Welwaerts volunteers who facilitated a number of games for the kids.

Welcome to the Alumni Community!

Kennedy-Lugar Youth Exchange and Study Program 2012-2013

Miss Abbas Nur-Aini
Mr. Abdul Radzmier
Miss Abdurahman Nujaima
Miss Abilul Fatima Irene
Mr. Ahmad Ryan
Miss Ambolodto Bai Rony Jullind
Miss Aquia Bailabi
Miss Bacaraman Arizza
Mr. Datudacula Rasmadin
Mr. Deculing Jene Boy
Miss Ebus Bai Sandra
Miss Ferolin Injeel Shamzia
Miss Hambali Arnilyne
Mr. Ibrahim Al-Rayyan
Mr. Indanan Aldazher

Miss Indasan Rowena
Miss Jadjuli Jihada
Miss Jailani Rehan
Mr. Jamasali Jeoffry
Miss Kudarat Siti Hainna
Miss Macud Indira Zainav
Miss Marrack Rimalyn
Mr. Mutalib Suhod II
Mr. Nurhasan Adzhar
Mr. Pangandaman Yusoph Khadafi
Mr. Kurt Pascual
Miss Salendab Shana
Miss Sison Rocel
Mr. Untong Yasser Ali

Regional English Language Office E-Teacher Scholarship Program 10 week intensive

Maria Corazon Borja
Claire Anne D. Jardenil

“Alumni Talks”

U.S. Embassy Manila's Public Affairs Section, in partnership with the Thomas Jefferson Information Center, launched the “Alumni Talks” series featuring alumni of U.S. Government sponsored academic and professional exchange programs as expert resource speakers on topics of current interest.



The first “Alumni Talks” speaker, International Visitors Leadership Program Alumnus Dhobie de Guzman, shared his experience advocating for “green libraries” made from recycled plastic bottles.



College of St. Benilde and Sapphire International Aviation Academy students with second “Alumni Talks” speaker Darwin Cunanan (in white polo) after the discussion on “Clark International Airport and Its Role in the Tourism Development of Central Luzon” on August 2.



Lawrence Benedict Ang, Climate Change Program Manager of Energy Development Corporation, spoke on “Climate Change and Renewable Energy” on August 5.



Counselor for Public Affairs Bettina Malone welcomed guests before the lecture series.

CALENDAR

September 27: Alumni Talks: Cultural Preservation

Speakers: [Ivan Anthony Henarres](#)

President, Heritage Conservation Society

[Quint Fansler](#), [Emily Catapang](#) & [Any Postma](#)

Mangyan Heritage Center

*To be part of the guestlist, e-mail details to Richmond Jimenez: JimenezRL@State.gov

September - October: Kennedy- Lugar Youth Exchange and Study (YES) Program Recruitment.

For more information please visit:

<http://manila.usembassy.gov/k-l-yes-program-recruitment-2014-2015-cycle.html>

UPCOMING EVENTS AND EXCHANGES

Details will be posted soon on <http://manila.usembassy.gov>

November: Active Citizenship Engagement Program for Filipino Youth (ACE Program).

December: 2013 Asean Youth Alumni Summit



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Ambassador Harry K. Thomas : [@AmbHarryThomas](#)

DCM Brian L. Goldbeck : [@USEmbManilaNo2](#)

Links to grants:

- <https://alumni.state.gov/member-resources/grant-opportunities>

Links to job opportunities:

- http://manila.usembassy.gov/employment_opps.html
- <https://alumni.state.gov/member-resources/job-opportunities>

If you have an upcoming Alumni Event or interesting stories and experiences to share, please contact:

Richmond Jimenez

Alumni Coordinator,
U.S. Embassy, Manila

email: JimenezRL@state.gov

We Congratulate International Leaders in Education Program (ILEP) Alumni

Prof. Dominique J. Maquiran

for winning the 2013 Metrobank Foundation Outstanding Teacher Secondary Competition

